Partnership between developers and housing associations

by G. J. Roper, Chairman, Berkeley Group plc

What can developers offer housing associations?
The ability to deal with the assembly of land; planning design skills and site optimisation; a faster design service with savings on fees; reduced risk from one stop responsibility and fixed price at developer's liability; bridging finance: multi-tenure schemes involving private market sales; possible future funding arrangements.

Advantages for developers from partnership with housing associations are:- building to a guaranteed sale: profit streams which are non-competitive to our core business: contra-cyclical activity; involvement in agreement for a planning consent conditional on an element of social housing.

Choice of developer by a housing association should be governed by the following factors:- willingness to be a long term partner; quality design and construction; ability to source and acquire land; financial stability.

Housing associations will have to realise that the present low level of costs cannot be maintained, and land values are rising.

There have been complaints from owner-occupiers about sharing a site with housing association tenants, but in one case the resident complained about turned out to be an owner. Still, we must avoid creating ghettos of people who are dependant on state hand-outs.

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